

Bodybuilding in Baghdad earns Soldier pro card

By Staff Sgt. Mary Rose
7th MPAD

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - Training and fitness are a big

part of the U.S. Army's way of life. Making sure Soldiers are able to complete 18-hour, and sometimes longer, missions while wearing up to 70 pounds

of gear is essential to survival in Iraq. But some Soldiers currently deployed to Baghdad have taken these elements to the next level and stood as an example to

their peers, of what hard work and dedication looks like.

Twenty-six bodybuilders, currently serving in Iraq, got the opportunity to show off the many hours they spend in the gym at the U.S. Forces-Iraq Bodybuilding Championships held here May 5.

The competition was comprised to six events; women's figure, women's bodybuilders, men's light weight, men's middle weight, men's light-heavy weight, and men's heavy weight. There was also a professional bodybuilder membership card given to the top male contestant.

The first place winners won \$100 donated gift certificates from Hessen Tactical, lifting belts from PowerTec and all who participated received their perspective trophies, medals from World Natural Bodybuilding Federation (WNBF), wrist straps from Schiek Sports and ATP Pro



(Photo by Staff Sgt. Mary Rose, 7th MPAD)

(Left to right) Sgt. Gordon Wesley won the men's heavy weight event; Sgt. George Figueroa won the light-heavy weight event; Department of Defense employee Marcon Haynes won the middle weight event; and Sgt. 1st Class Demetrial Houston won men's light-weight event and the men's overall competition.

See **Body** Page 2

East Baghdad preschool children get needed check-ups

By Staff Sgt. Wayne Marlow
2-2 Inf. Div. Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE RUSTAMIYAH, Iraq - Soldiers with the 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, enter a Baghdad preschool May 2, and at first glance, they frighten the youngsters.

The helmets and full gear give the Soldiers an otherworldly look, an appearance multiplied by the dark eye protection.

But then the glasses come off, followed by the helmets. They are replaced by

coloring books and stuffed animals. Slowly, the frowns are replaced with smiles. When candy is passed around, the transformation is complete.

Convinced the Soldiers are the good guys, the children cheerfully line up for the man with a thermometer and stethoscope.

"We're doing a medical needs analysis," explained 2nd Lt. Ryan Wood of Salt Lake City, a medical services officer for 2-16th. "When we did a walk through Baghdad, we identified certain schools and clinics where we could come back and do a needs analysis."

One of the reasons this preschool was

chosen was the presence of special-needs children. Although U.S. personnel will do the analysis, any follow-ups will be done by Iraqis.

"We're bringing IPs (Iraqi police) with us, and their medics," Wood said. "They are going to be taking the lead. We will help with the diagnosis, but our main role is to help them figure out what they can do to help their own people. Right now, they're pretty limited in their medical assets. We want to offer them a venue to

See **Check-up** Page 3

Bodybuilding Baghdad style

Body

From Page 1

Wrist Straps and Certificate's of Achievement from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division.

The first place winners of each event are:

Sgt. Shawn Mackey, a 33-year-old native of New Bern, N.C for the women's bodybuilder event; Sgt. 1st Class Demetrial Houston, a 38-year-old Dallas native, for the men's light weight event; Marcon Haynes, a civilian contractor and a 32-year-old hailing from Tampa, Fla., for the men's middle weight event; Sgt. George Figueroa, a 23-year-old native of Wayne, N.J., for the men's light-heavy weight event; Sgt. Wesley Gordon, a native of Jackson, Mich, for the men's heavy weight event, Capt. Carrie Parker, a 38-year-old San Antonio native, for the women's figure event.

Houston, who is with the Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, won the overall competition and earned his professional natural bodybuilding membership card, which will be issued by the International Natural Bodybuilding and Fitness Federation.

"It's a life style," he said of bodybuild-



(Photo by Staff Sgt. Mary Rose 7th MPAD)
Sgt. 1st Class Demetrial Houston, won the men's overall Iraq Bodybuilding competition May 5.

ing. Houston competed and won his first competition 10 years ago in Seoul, Korea, and has been involved with natural bodybuilding ever since.

Being involved with the sport of bodybuilding also helps him train his Soldiers. "It's a good sport," said Houston who is also a Tae Bo instructor. "Physical fitness is a

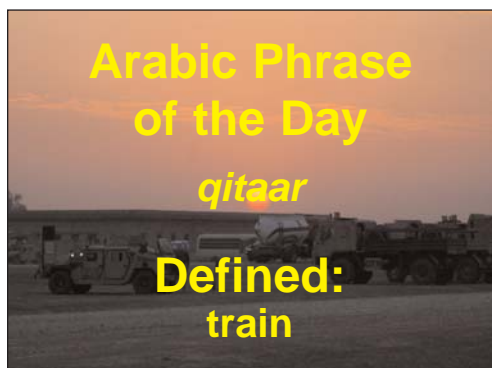
major part in the Army's obligation right now."




The man behind the competition, 1st Sgt. Woody B. Carter, 57th Signal Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, has been an enthusiast and involved with natural bodybuilding most of his life.

"I just want to get out there and promote natural bodybuilding," he said.

With several months left in Carter's deployment to Baghdad, this isn't the last bodybuilding competition for him to organize. Carter, a native of Pensacola, Fla., is now preparing for the next bodybuilding show, the Baghdad Classic, Bodybuilding and Fitness Competition, which is set for Sept. 22.

Though Carter arranged the event, he received a generous amount of support from many outside organizations to make the competition run flawlessly. U.S. Forces-Iraq Bodybuilding Championships sponsors included World Natural Bodybuilding Federation (WNBF), International Natural Bodybuilding and Fitness (INBF) Federation, Hessen Tactical, Cytosport, Integrated Sports Science (ISS), PROSOURCE, PROMAX, PowerTec, Schiek Sports, ATP-Pro Wrist Strap.



Iraq 3-Day Weather Report			
	Today	Tomorrow	Saturday
	High: 102 Low: 73	High: 102 Low: 73	High: 100 Low: 73

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(Photo by Staff Sgt. Wayne Marlow 2-2 Inf. Public Affairs)

Children at a Baghdad preschool take turns being given a medical check-up May 2. Soldiers of the 2nd Bn., 16th Inf. Regt. and Iraqi police medics conducted a medical needs analysis to learn if any of the children had health issues.

Children get check-ups

Check-up

From Page 1

use their skills while under supervision."

Getting out in the community can pay big dividends, according to Wood.

"There are two things we hope to transmit to the people," he said. "Number one, IP medics are taking an interest in the well-being of everyday Iraqis. Number two, Americans are here to make their lives better and to get them the supplies and skills to do their jobs."

Wood said the Iraqis have limited resources when it comes to dealing with special-needs children, so part of the U.S. assistance will be to better acquaint them with tools to do the job. For instance, they will seek out Arabic language pamphlets or make sure they know what assets are available at Medical City.

"We want to be able to streamline the process...and get information in their hands," Wood said.

First, though, it must be determined

what the children's medical needs are.

"They do a really basic look at the kids to identify trends or problems so the administrators can let the parents know if anything is wrong," Wood said.

Maj. Albert delaGarza, the 2-16 battalion surgeon from Los Angeles, oversaw the analysis.

"There had been concerns expressed about a couple of kids," he said. "We came to see if coalition forces could offer assistance."

He said one of the children was likely autistic, while another probably suffered some malnutrition. So, delaGarza advised the preschool directors about what course to follow, and he will try to get more information to them on how to deal with the issues.

While the day will help make a difference in the children's lives, they weren't the only ones impacted.

"For two hours, we can sit down with some kids and figure out what their needs are," Wood said. "These are the missions that everyone loves to go on."

Baghdad in Brief

Tips lead to twin car bomb discoveries in Rashid

BAGHDAD- Acting on tips provided by civilians, Iraqi security forces and Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers discovered two vehicle-borne explosive devices May 9, in the Rashid District.

Members of the Fort Riley, Kan.-based Company B, 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment "Black Lions," and the 3rd Stryker Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division found the vehicles while investigating information given to them and their Iraqi national police counterparts by Iraqi citizens.

The Black Lions were enroute to investigate a red Mazda when the vehicle exploded in the Bayaa area. An Iraqi explosive ordnance disposal team conducted post-assessment until relieved by MND-B troops.

One 120mm and one 105mm artillery round, two propane tanks, eight artillery fuses, two 2-liter bottles of homemade explosives, a cellular telephone and three batteries were discovered in the wreckage.

In another discovery, Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment "Tomahawks" halted a red vehicle while investigating a tip from a local Iraqi about a suspicious car matching the description.

The EOD team also recovered one 120mm, one 107mm, six 57mm unexploded projectiles and four 2-liter bottles of homemade explosives with detonation cords attached from the scene.

"When citizens provide important tips like these, it sends a powerful message to those criminals responsible," said Col. Ricky D. Gibbs, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division commander. "The message is that the Iraqi people are not going to tolerate the violence these extremists bring to Rashid's neighborhoods and residential areas. We're grateful for their assistance in preventing any further bloodshed from occurring today."

There were no injuries to civilians or military personnel in either incident.

Nearly naked in Baghdad

Officer sets, achieves goal at Camp Liberty competition

**By Maj. Kevin Inglin
7th MPAD**

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - I stood in my underwear in front of hundreds of people here May 5.

That's something I never thought would happen, unless perhaps I lost some kind of bet. But the above-stated condition was done of my own volition, a decision made under no conditions of duress and one seemingly arrived at while I was of sound mind.

So, what would possess me, at the age of 36, to decide that baring most of my body in front of a large group of people was a good idea?

Because four months ago I told myself I would do it.

I've long been a proponent of setting goals, outlining a plan to achieve the goals, and completing the work necessary to accomplish those goals. It's been a formula that's served me well in my life and Army career to date, and the formula once again worked this weekend.

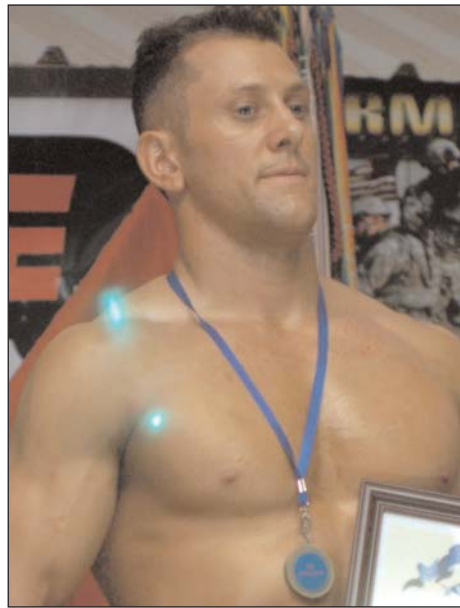
Mind you, my stated goal was not to stand in front of a large group of people in my underwear. The stated goal was to compete in the U.S. Forces-Iraq Bodybuilding Championships held at Camp Liberty.

The idea of me competing in a bodybuilding competition was something not only entirely foreign to me; it was a goal that brought a great deal of trepidation.

The thought of me, a real life "98-pound weakling" as a freshman in high school, competing in a bodybuilding contest was about as an absurd an idea that I quite possibly have ever had.

I was also well-aware that the idea would reasonably be expected to bring a good deal of needling from peers, not to mention make the Soldiers whom I command think their boss may have a screw or two loose.

Maintaining the mantra that many a great innovators were laughed at on their way to creating genius (see Edison and the incandescent light bulb), this goal of mine was much



(Photo by Staff Sgt. Mary Rose 7th MPAD)

Maj. Kevin Inglin, commander of the 7th MPAD, spent four months preparing for a bodybuilding competition held May 5 at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

more about having the personal courage to do something I knew would be outside of my comfort zone than in actually winning the competition.

Afraid or not, I decided in January that I would compete; on Saturday, I completed the stated goal.

This brings us back to me in my underwear in front of hundreds of people. The show brought the fear to light that I had expected.

In the early pre-judging round, my legs were shaking nearly uncontrollably as I stood on stage; first with my group of five competitors in my division, then individually as I had to pose at center stage for 60 seconds for the judges.

Shaking legs and all, I managed to make it through the morning session in front of all of those people and ultimately realized that my fear of doing the show was probably exaggerated; it actually wasn't that bad after all.

We returned later in the afternoon to do a

second round of posing, only this time there were nearly three times as many people in the audience, and the individual posing routines were longer and set to music.

As I took the stage for the evening session with my group, the leg shaking was not an issue. I realized I had done this before and came out of it just fine. My confidence was growing, and as I took the stage for my 90-second routine set to music, I found myself actually somewhat enjoying the event.

Never worried about how I would finish in the contest, for me, following through on a stated objective was winning enough. Though, I am not ashamed to have claimed a third-place showing in the light-heavyweight division, leg shakes and all.

The completion of the competition brought to a close four months of 5 a.m. wakeups to go to the gym, four months of me questioning my own sanity, and four months of working every day to overcome self-doubt and believe in myself and in what I was doing.

The completion of the competition also brought me a great deal of confidence and pride in having accomplished what I set out to do.

I highly recommend to all to do the same. Regardless of what people think of your ideas or what your personal goals are, if you have something you want to accomplish, set the objective, come up with a plan, and go for it. You are the key in determining if you will succeed in your endeavors.

There's another show in October and before I left the contest other competitors were already asking me if I would be taking part.

While my intent was never truly to become a bodybuilder, having completed this show, the idea of doing it again in October isn't nearly as frightening to me as it was back in January. In fact, having learned quite a bit about the sport, I could actually use the experience I've gained to my advantage.

Maybe I will compete again in October, only this time I'll be past the goal of just completing the show in my underwear.

I might just have to set a goal to win it.